
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

SB 6421

Brief Description: Providing medical coverage for smoking cessation programs.

Sponsors: Senators Pridemore, Keiser, McDermott, Hatfield, Kohl-Welles and Pflug.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides coverage for smoking cessation counseling services, including prescription and nonprescription drugs, for clients enrolled in the medical assistance and medical care services programs.

Hearing Date: 2/25/08

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 45.3 million people smoke cigarettes in the United States. The CDC has labeled cigarette smoking the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, accounting for approximately one out of every five deaths annually, or approximately 438,000 people.

The Department of Social and Health Services (Department) provides coverage for smoking cessation counseling for pregnant women. The coverage applies during pregnancy through two months after giving birth. The coverage includes providing information and assistance to help the client stop smoking and may include prescriptions for pharmaceutical products upon attaining prior authorization.

Summary of Bill:

The Department must provide a smoking cessation benefit to adults enrolled in the medical assistance and medical care services programs. The benefit must cover smoking cessation counseling services and prescription and nonprescription medications to promote smoking

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cessation. Prior authorization is not required to receive counseling services or medications. The Department may implement rules regarding appropriate coverage limitations as necessary to discourage waste or address instances of fraud.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.